

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 and 20-22 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 11, 16, 20 and 21 are amended and claims 19 and 23-25 are canceled.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration (since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution); (c) do not present any additional claims; and (d) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments merely incorporate the features of claims 19 and 23-25 into claims 1, 11, 16 and 21. In addition, based on the cancellation of claim 19, claim 20 is amended to depend from claim 16. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiner Haran in the July 27, 2004 personal interview. In the interview, it was agreed that the above amendment would be entered. Applicants' further separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

Claims 1-12, 14 and 16-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 over U.S. Patent No 5,688,355 to Yu in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,997,974 to Schlueter et al. (hereinafter "Schlueter '974"). In addition, claims 13 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 over Yu in view of Schlueter '974 and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,549,193 to Schlueter et al. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

The independent claims have been amended to recite that the flexible substrate support sheet is a single layer of substantially homogenous material. As described in the

present specification at paragraph [0037], laser ablation of a multiple layered material poses problems with proper absorption of laser energy. In contrast, the laser ablation of a homogenous material does not provide these problems. Thus, the present inventors found that utilizing the present process not only provides the improved seamed features provided by applying a layer over a seamed layer, as described in Schlueter '974, it also provides an improved seamed layer since the problems associated with the laser ablation of multiple layered materials are also avoided.

Yu is directed to a method of making a seamed flexible belt in which a flexible sheet having all of the layers of the belt to be formed undergoes ablation. A first marginal end region is then overlapped with a second marginal end region and fused to form a seamed belt. Col. 8, lines 1-22. Yu does not teach or suggest applying at least one coating on the seamed belt formed thereby. Instead, Yu teaches incorporating a charge transport layer and a charge generating layer in the flexible sheet that undergoes ablation. Col. 19, lines 54-63.

The Patent Office argues that it would have been obvious to modify Yu so as to provide the advantages achieved by Schlueter '974. Although Applicants do not agree that this combination is proper for the reasons set forth in the Amendment filed May 13, 2004, it is respectfully submitted that any combination of Yu with Schlueter '974 would not teach subjecting only one homogenous layer to ablation followed by forming all but one layer of a multilayered device by the technique described in Schlueter '974. In particular, neither Yu nor Schlueter '974 teach any advantage to subjecting only one homogenous layer to ablation. In fact, Yu teaches away from such a combination by subjecting a flexible sheet having all of the layers of a belt to ablation.

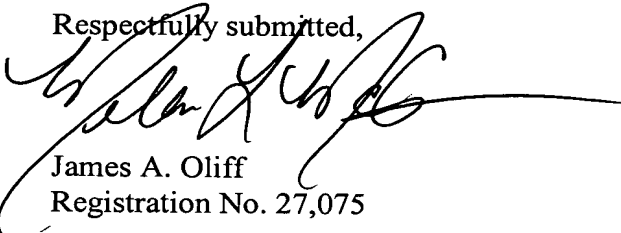
For at least the reasons discussed above, the combination of Yu with Schlueter '974 does not teach or suggest the features of claims 1, 11, 16 and 21. Therefore, the rejection of claims 1, 11, 16 and 21 and claims 2-10, 12, 14, 17-20 and 22-25, which depend on one of claims 1, 11, 16 and 21, should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Schlueter '193 does not overcome the deficiencies of Yu and/or Schlueter '974. Therefore, the rejection of claims 13 and 15, which depend on claim 11, should also be reconsidered and withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-18 and 20-22 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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